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Doctor Cites 3,000 U.S. Sex Changes

NEW YORK (AP) -More than 3,000 sex change operations have been performed in the United States in the past 10 years, and one of the biggest problems today, says a doctor involved in many of them, is the continuing prejudice toward trans-

"Prejudice towards transsexuals has been a disgrace in this country," said Dr. Roberto C. Granato, who performed the sex change operation on Dr. Renee Richards, whose participation in women's tennis competition has been the center of recent controversy.

DR. RICHARDS, who once played tennis as Dr. Richard Raskind, advanced Tuesday to the women's quarterfinals of the \$60,000 Tennis Week tournament at South Orange, N.J.

Granato, a urologist and professor at Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons, said more and more doctors are performing the procedure as it becomes accepted in the medical

community.
"I'm glad more doctors are doing it because I've spent a good length of time teaching residents, and presenting the technique to such organizations as the American Urological Association, the American Medical Association and the American College of Surgeons," said Granato, 50, an Argentinian.

GRANATO HAS per-formed more than 200 sex change operations in the past seven years.
"At first I encountered

prejudice from the medical community, the nursing community and the lay community, he said. "But little by little, that has broken down. Now those same people want to learn about the procedure, they want to help."

In male-to-female sur-gery, the male sexual organs are removed. The urethra - the canal that carries urine from the bladder to be expelled - is preserved and trimmed to female size, and the skin of the penis is kept and used later as lining of the new vagina. The female clitoris is created with erectile tissue from the penis.

THE VAGINA is placed in the normal area between the bladder and the rectum. This means the interior wall of the vagina is in direct contact with an erogenous nerve network, permitting orgasm during intercourse. Breasts are increased with silicone.

The patient is in the hospital for eight days, and in four to eight weeks, she can have normal sexual intercourse, Granato

The female-to-male operation is more complex and not as rewarding for the patient, Granato said, because it is difficult to obtain erectile tissue for a penis. He said he has only been involved in three female-to-male operations.

"BEFORE I consider operating, the person has to have a complete evaluation from a psychiatrist, counseling, and must have taken female hormones for at least a year and undergone all the beautification and cosmetic pro-cesses as a female," he said. "Then I do it, after written advice from a psychiatrist.

Dr. Richards, 42, an opthalmologist, wants to play in the U.S. Open tournament at Forest Hills, N.Y., next week. Tennis officials have demanded she take a chromosome test to prove her sexuali-

She has refused to take the test, arguing it is an infringment on her rights and an invalid indication of a person's sex. Granato said he agrees.

He said the test would reveal traces of male chromosomes and is unfair because "sexuality is in the individual's mind and body. Chromosomes are secondary."

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